alleged irregularities in the procurement of rice by FCI in Punjab during the Kharif Marketing Season 2004-05 were already underway when the CBI investigation into the same matter began in Sept. 2005. As a result of the enquiry by FCI management and the Department of Food & Public Distribution, action was initiated against the concerned oficers in the FCI.

(b) There is an elaborate mechanism in the FCI to take preventive and deterrent action against corrupt practices, besides well laid down procedures for every aspect of operational matters. Frequent surprise and periodical inspections are carried out at the FCI offices and Depots throughout the country. The irregularities noticed during these inspections are investigated thoroughly and penalties have been imposed on a large number of employee found guilty.

(c) and (d) In the allegations regarding procurement of sub-quality rice during KMS 2004-05 the CBI has already registered three First Information Reports against eighty-three FCI officers/official of Punjab Region, including the then Sr. Regional Manager, Punjab and the then Dy. General Manager (Quality Control) besides 330 private rice millers.

Economic cost of wheat and rice

†*15. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that economic cost of wheat and rice has risen during the last two years in the Food Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the cost increase during the years 2004—2006;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Food Corporation of India has sold less quantity in 2005-06 in comparison to 2003-04 in the open market and under the Public Distribution System; and

(d) if so, the facts in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) Details of the economic cost of wheat and rice for the years 2003-04, 2004-05 and 2005-06 are as under:—

Year	Economic cost (Rs./Qtl)	
	Wheat	Rice
2003-04	918.69	1236.09
2004-05 (P)	1049.59*	1329.59*
2005-06 (RE)	1030.81	1334.46

(P)— Provisional. (RE)—Revised Estimates.

* Includes expenditure of Rs. 39.86 per qtl. in respect of wheat and Rs. 41.95 per qtl. in respect of rice on account of payment of past years' arrears to the State Governments on account of finalisation of procurement incidentals of past years.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) The quantity of foodgrains sold by the Food Corporation of India (FCI) under Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSS) from 2003-04 to 2005-06 is as under:—

(In lakh tonnes)

Year	TPDS		OMSS	
	Rice	Wheat	Rice*	Wheat
2003-04	115.29	94.19	-	9.82
2004-05	137.74	111.62	-	2.42
2005-06#	143.00	112.00	-	10.00

* No open sale of rice is undertaken.

Figures for 2005-06 include projected offtake upto March, 2006.

Offtake of foodgrains

*16. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the offtake of foodgrains meant for BPL families has been less than the allocation during the last three years;

(b) if so, whether the issue price is the major reason; and